

1 ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A catheter particularly useful for ablation lesions within a tubular region of or near the heart is provided. The catheter comprises an elongated flexible tubular catheter body having an axis and proximal and distal ends. An ablation assembly is mounted at the distal end of the tubular body. The ablation assembly has a preformed generally circular curve having an outer surface and being generally transverse to the axis of the catheter body. The ablation assembly comprises a flexible tubing having proximal and distal ends that carries a tip electrode at its distal end. An electrode lead wire extends through the catheter body and into the ablation assembly and has a distal end connected to the tip electrode. In use, the distal end of the catheter is inserted into the heart of a patient. At least a portion of the outer circumference of the generally circular curve is contacted with the inner circumference of the tubular region so that the tip electrode is in a first position in contact with tissue along the inner circumference. The tip electrode is used to ablate tissue at the first position. The ablation assembly can then be rotated so that the tip electrode is in a second position in contact with tissue along the inner circumference different from the first position, and the tip electrode is used to ablate tissue at the second position. This procedure can be repeated to form a lesion of the desired length along the inner circumference.